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## PRESS RELEASE: Happy in your job? Thank your colleagues!

Getting on well with colleagues gives workers greater job satisfaction than having a good salary, according to new research.

A new study released tomorrow (Tuesday 28 January), *'New Decade, New Direction,'* by The Institute of Leadership & Management asked more than 2,100 workers to identify the factors that affect their job satisfaction and explored their career plans for the new decade.

- Only 24 per cent described themselves as 'very satisfied' in their current role.
- Colleagues have the biggest impact on job satisfaction – good relationships with colleagues is the most important factor in determining job satisfaction with 77 per cent of satisfied workers citing it.
- Amongst 'satisfied' people, salary was the eighth most important factor in determining happiness in their job, whereas dissatisfied employees cited it as third.
- The top two career goals for 2020 were expanding professional knowledge (50 per cent) followed by getting better at leading and managing (36 per cent). Nearly a third identified the importance of better work-life balance.
- Training (43 per cent) and coaching (36 per cent), which do not necessarily result in a qualification, are considered important factors for career progression.

The research – partnered by Amazing If and Triangirls – revealed that 77 per cent of satisfied workers said their job satisfaction is affected by the positive relationships they have with their colleagues. Other factors included access to training and development, being trusted to take on more responsibility and access to flexible working. Satisfied workers considered salary less important than feeling connected to the purpose of the organisation and having a challenging role.

It's not just our colleagues who have an impact on job satisfaction; 47 per cent of those who said they are dissatisfied in their current role feel undervalued by their managers. Other factors linked to dissatisfaction include having a lack of growth and development opportunities, low salary and negative company culture.

**Kate Cooper, Head of Research, Policy and Standards at The Institute of Leadership & Management**, said: "This research reveals that it can be the less concrete factors, such as relationships, that can make the difference between someone enjoying their job or not – and potentially wanting to leave. At a time when mental health and wellbeing is high on the agenda and rightly being taken more seriously, it's particularly encouraging to see the majority of people recognising the importance of having good relationships with their colleagues and even, giving it a higher priority than factors such as salary. These relationships can help to create a healthier and happier working environment, and a team with higher morale.

"While they may persuade people to hang on in their current roles, pay rises won't make anyone automatically *like* their jobs more. So, while pay is really important – particularly if we feel that, compared to others, we're being inadequately rewarded – it still doesn't provide us with *intrinsic* satisfaction with the work that we do. To help encourage greater

levels of job satisfaction, it's crucial for business leaders to understand what's important to their staff, which isn't always financially driven, as our findings show."

- **Women seek job satisfaction around work-life balance, while men want a challenging role**

The findings also revealed that for women who are satisfied in their current role, a short commute and generous annual leave entitlement adds to their satisfaction. Whereas men see challenging work and a positive company culture as more important. This suggests external factors are of greater importance to women than internal organisational ones.

For those dissatisfied workers, almost half of women cited that feeling valued by their manager was an important factor affecting their job contentment. In contrast, male dissatisfaction was mostly affected by their trust in their CEO.

- **2020 career goals affected by job satisfaction**

The start of a new year – and decade – often gives workers the inspiration to reflect on their career goals for the coming years. Expanding professional knowledge was voted the top career goal for 2020, according to 50 per cent of all respondents. This was followed by getting better at leading and managing (36 per cent), and then improving work-life balance. A fifth said they want to get a new job in 2020 and 27 per cent aim to get a pay rise this year.

There is undoubtedly an appetite for learning, both in technical/professional skills and leadership and management capabilities, and this is not necessarily equated with achieving a qualification.

In contrast, getting a new job for dissatisfied workers was the top priority (48 per cent), in addition to expanding professional knowledge and getting a pay rise.

Women are more likely to work on their confidence in 2020 (30 per cent, compared to 16 per cent of men), whereas men want to focus on expanding their professional knowledge (53 per cent, compared to 47 per cent of women).

- **Ongoing learning is considered important for career progression**

The survey also explored how to achieve career progression. Developing a career plan was the most popular option (44 per cent), followed closely by training (43 per cent) and coaching (36 per cent), which do not necessarily result in a qualification.

Learning and gaining recognition for that learning is considered important for career progression. Learning takes many forms, whether formally through qualifications or more informally through non-accredited training, coaching or more general courses; these were all cited as possible means of career enhancement.

The Institute of Leadership & Management has some advice for leaders and managers who want to retain their staff and ensure their organisation is a great place to work:

- Don't assume you know how people derive satisfaction from their work, ask them.
- Pay attention to non-financial aspects of a job; flexible working, challenging work and being valued are often very important, and a higher salary does not always compensate for the loss, or absence, of these aspects.
- Allow time, and put effort, into creating opportunities to build the social relationships that are so key to so many people, paying special attention to flexible and distributed workers.
- Social activities don't necessarily have to be time-consuming or expensive. Opportunities to have lunch or coffee together are important, arrange meetings that include a proper break rather than 'working through'.
- View paying travel for regular face-to-face meetings as an investment not an expense.
- Provide opportunities and encouragement for informal learning and the development of coaching skills.

For more information about The Institute of Leadership & Management, please visit [www.institutelm.com](http://www.institutelm.com).

## ENDS

### Notes to editors:

The Institute of Leadership & Management surveyed 2,141 members and non-members in January 2020, via an online survey, looking at the factors affecting the level of job satisfaction and career plans for the new decade. To download a copy of *New Decade, New Direction*, please visit <http://institutelm.com/resourceLibrary/new-decade-new-direction.html>

For more details or requests for interview, please contact Pippa Hanson / Luke Aldridge at Camargue: [phanson@camargue.uk](mailto:phanson@camargue.uk) / [laldrige@camargue.uk](mailto:laldrige@camargue.uk) or 01242 577277. You can download a press pack about The Institute [here](#).

### Additional resources:

- Available for interview:
  - Kate Cooper – Head of Research, Policy and Standards at The Institute of Leadership & Management
- Research reports:
  - [New decade, new direction](#) (2020)
  - [New year: is it time for a new job?](#) (2019)
- Images available in [Dropbox](#)
  - Report results – graphs
  - Office worker images
  - Kate Cooper image (spokesperson)

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